

[Idma]

/76 cont. /

361
619 The other metropolis of the Idma, Ad'erd'ur, is built at the bottom of a pit that an acropolis dominates toward the S. This agadir was the seat of an old habitat. The persecutions of spirits depopulated it: the devil was at work in the houses. The people were truly delivered only by the intervention of Sidi Lh'sen b. Bubker. Still today, this side is called unlucky and is hardly inhabited any more except by the ikhs of the ait LqaId, which leads a life apart. The present village groups its houses in front of the agadir, on a versant exposed to the S. Downstream, another rock in the form of an acropolis, rising in the very bed of the torrent, the Tansmert u Rumi, passes as having been a fortress of the Christians, former occupants of the valley. At its summit a block of several tons rests in balance. Two others rear a black silhouette that seems to look downstream. A country of dark legends, of cruel memories.

173
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[795]
[796] At a time that one can put at the beginning of the eighteenth century, the Idma were still reduced to this small canton, redoubtable, however, by their arms and appetite. Nevertheless, on the other side of the Seksawa, the zaouia of Asstif had already been rendered illustrious by a national saint. Between the two, covering the main valley up to Z'init' and the affluent valleys up to Asstif on one hand, Wanchkrir on the other, reigned the a. Gasa. The history of the Idma, land development, expansion of groups, and structure of the command, is henceforth linked to the expulsion of the "usurpers."

/77/ Still today, popular tradition goes back to this period when the Idma were reduced to two villages and when, either concurrently or alternatively, two lineages, coming from two sons of Maghagh, exercised power. The first two chiefs that are cited are, toward the end of the seventeenth century, Brah'm u Jâa Rryun of the ait Uchâwi and Wakrim u Sâid of the Iseqqalen. 173
721 They fought against the a. Gasa. The latter invited them to a "banquet-palaver," tiwilt, and massacred forty Idma by surprise. 619
Fortunately the two chiefs were warned by a woman who signaled to them from the top of a rock that there would be killing. They pretended to have forgotten a piece of clothing and slipped away.